Chromebook Basics

A Chromebook is a simple, affordable laptop that lives on the internet. Instead of programs you install, almost everything happens in the Chrome web browser — email, websites, video calls, photos, and documents.

Your screen, in three parts

Everything on a Chromebook starts from the bar at the very bottom of the screen. It is called the shelf, and it has three parts:

- The circle (bottom-left): this is the Launcher. Click or tap it to see every app on your Chromebook.
- The middle of the shelf: your pinned apps — the ones you use most. To add one, open the Launcher, right-click the app, and choose Pin to shelf. To remove one, right-click it on the shelf and choose Unpin.
- The clock area (bottom-right): this is Quick Settings. Click the time to see your Wi-Fi, battery, the Settings gear, and the power button.

The Launcher: all your apps in one place

- Lost an app? Open the Launcher and type its name in the search bar at the top. It finds apps, files, and even websites.
- The Chrome browser is your home base. Almost everything on a Chromebook — Gmail, photos, documents, video calls — opens in Chrome, just like websites.

Everyday tasks

Connect to Wi-Fi: click the time in the bottom-right corner, click Wi-Fi, choose your network name, and type the password.

Open Gmail or a website: open Chrome from the shelf, type gmail.com (or any address) in the bar at the top, and press Enter.

Install an app: most modern Chromebooks include the Google Play Store — the same app store as Android phones. Open it from the Launcher, search for the app you want, and click Install. It will appear in your Launcher.

Sleep or shut down: closing the lid puts it to sleep — that is all most people ever need. To fully shut down, click the time in the bottom-right corner, click the power symbol, and choose Shut down.

Updates take care of themselves: a Chromebook downloads and installs its own updates in the background. If you ever want to check, open Settings and go to About ChromeOS, then Check for updates.

Honest limits of a Chromebook

- It needs the internet for most things. A few apps can be set up to work offline, but a Chromebook is happiest on Wi-Fi.
- Printing works fine. Go to Settings, then Advanced, then Print and scan, then Printers — if your printer is on the same Wi-Fi, click Save next to it. Then press Ctrl + P anywhere to print.
- Not the right choice if you need heavy Windows or Mac programs, specialized work software, or serious gaming. For email, web, photos, and video calls, it is plenty.

When to call Sean instead

- Choosing between a Chromebook, a Windows laptop, or an iPad.
- Setting up a new Chromebook with your email and Wi-Fi.
- A printer that will not connect to the Chromebook.
- Moving your photos and files from an old computer.

Call Sean at (813) 770-6082.

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